

The Wellesley Cultural Council

The Wellesley Cultural Council consists of a group of Wellesley residents appointed by the Selectmen. Its primary task is to administer the funds that the Massachusetts Cultural Council allots to Wellesley from State funds, including the lottery. These funds support the arts, humanities and sciences in the Wellesley community.

The Council also serves as an advocacy voice for the arts in our town and state. Members in 2005-2006 include: Suzanne Beisecker, Robby Morse Levy, Jan Schwaner (treasurer) Nora Tracy Phillips, Sajida Khudairi, Andrea Kaiser (Chair), Ellen Hallor, and Ruth Anne Nuwayser.

The Council is grateful to those individuals and groups in Wellesley who support it, who offer suggestions and financial contributions, especially the Rotary Club of Wellesley whose ongoing contributions allow the Wellesley Cultural Council to distribute more grant funds than allotted by the State, the Wellesley Police for use of the Kingsbury Room for meetings, and the Wellesley Free Library for use of meeting and special event space.

Local Cultural Grants

The Wellesley Cultural Council meets on average four times each year at the Town Hall, Library, or Police Station. In the fall, grant applications are announced in the Wellesley Townsman and blank applications are made available at the Library and Town Hall. Completed applications are due October 15, then are catalogued and submitted to each Council member. Members hold two meetings: first, to determine which grants are of the highest priority, and second, to determine the dollar amounts to be awarded to each successful applicant. Recommendations for grants to be funded are completed by December 15 of each year and decisions are passed on to the Massachusetts Cultural Council for approval. Because we are a "streamlined" council (those local councils which have an excellent track record with grants management and council training are recognized as streamlined), our grants are approved by early January and funds are available by the end of that month. The Council does not participate in the PASS program.

All grants are "reimbursable," so grant monies are distributed only after an event or activity has taken place and documentation to that effect is presented to the Wellesley Cultural Council Treasurer for payment. When previously approved grants are not used by the recipient, these funds carry over to the next grant cycle.

We encourage all Wellesley organizations, as well as individual artists, humanists and scientists residing in the Town of Wellesley to consider applying for Council funds. The Council also considers applicants from other Massachusetts communities who bring new and different opportunities to residents of Wellesley.

In 2005-2006, the Wellesley Cultural Council was allocated \$2770 by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. We received 17 applications requesting a total of \$10,995 and funded 9 programs, ranging in grant amounts from \$150 to \$1000. Together with other funds in our account, the Council awarded \$5650 in grants to: the Wellesley Symphony Orchestra (\$1000), Wellesley Choral Society (\$1000), Wellesley Players (\$1000), St. Andrews Performing Arts Series (\$500), John Root (\$500), Fiske School Creative Arts (\$500) The Arghand Project (\$500), Wellesley Free Library (\$500), and Three Apples Storytelling Festival (\$150).

Other Council Activities

As required of every cultural council at regular intervals, the Wellesley Cultural Council held a public meeting on April 2, 2006 in the Wellesley Free Library's Wakelin Room. The public was duly invited and the audience included grant recipients, Council members, artists and the general public. The program consisted of 15-minute showcase performances by a variety of artists: Wellesley Winds, Wellesley High School Drama, Wellesley Players, Wellesley Choral Society, and Jackson Gillman, Storyteller. In addition there was a business meeting to bring the public up to date and to get feedback on Council actions. A reception followed.

Wellesley Cultural Council meetings are posted at Town Hall and are open to the public. Notebooks are available to the public in the Selectmen's Office in Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Kaiser, Chair

August 2006